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Midnight Painter











Chapter 1 by Sam I am

As the sun fades into a dreary night sky, she awakens. Her blue eyes open slowly as she arises from her bed. Her jet black hair was still in the tight bun from last night's round. She makes her way slowly to her other room where she spends all night at. With brushes and paint ready to go, she starts painting on a blank canvas. Colors swirl in her mind as she envisions the next dream. When she finishes, she moves on to the next one. Her name is one well known throughout the world: Lyla, the Midnight Painter.

Chapter 2 by JM



They say that her paintings can carry you to places so fantastic that you can't even visit them in your dreams. They sell for millions of dollars, scooped up by celebrities and CEOs and trust fund babies who want desperately to escape the mundanities of their realities, even if it means squandering their fortunes.

There are addiction programs for people who cannot bear to be apart from Lyla's painted worlds, most of which revolve around finding fantasy in life's most minor details, few of which succeed.

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It has made Lyla exceedingly wealthy. It has also found the world turning on her with a kind of moral outrage traditionally reserved for drug dealers. She is a ruiner of lives, a manipulator of the lonely and the sad and the desperate.

There are many things the world doesn't know about her, however.

Chapter 3 by JT



When the darkness drizzled into the sky, the auburn and indigo pigments emulsified like an orchestra on Lyla's linen canvas. Settled into a dim corner of a concrete room, she needed no view or inspiration to guide her wrist.

The handcrafted paint had been thoughtfully constructed in its redolence. To Lyla, it smelt of cigarette smoke, laced on her mother's twill coat. To another, it might smell of peonies and sweet honey; whatever comforted the possessor the most. The smell brought a reluctant smile to her face as the paintbrush glazed over the surface in swift, delicate movements. The colours rippled together in sweet harmony, fabricating allure true to the beholder.

She dipped the tip of the brush into a glass pot of ashen paint, allowing a dewy drop to fall on her smock as she lifted it to the mural. In a single harsh motion, the colour ravaged the canvas consuming it in one grand gulp. The painting was ruined.

The brush clattered onto the tiled floor, plummeting from the Midnight Painter's grasp.

Chapter 4 by Astrid



She fell to the floor, eyes closed, unmoving. To look at her, she might have been sleeping, unless you looked closer, and saw the stream of bright red blood emitting from her neck. The Midnight Painter was dead.

A black shadow slid over her body, staring at it. A wide smile spread over its face, delighting in her death. She would pain him no more.

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So he decided that on that fateful night, she had to die.

It is not an easy feast for him to come alive out of the painting. Normally what the painting would do is to be just what the buyers want it to do. He had to summon the higher power to allow him just one appearance before the Midnight Painter. It was a huge wager. But one he would readily make again if he had to.

Chapter 6 by eduardo cedeno



"Did you honestly think it would be that easy, Shadow?" The shadow recoiled at the sound of Lyla's voice. She should be dead! He crept out of the darkness, swirling his fluid body around Lyla's body.

She was dead. There was no denying the lack of breath, the still heart, and the cold that had settled on Lyla. Her green eyes, once filled with a brilliant light, were no vacant and glazed over. Even the crimson pool of coagulating blood was proof that his mistress was dead.

"Honestly," said Lyla. "I cannot believe were fooled so easily, Shadow." The room began to distort; its colors blending and melting together the wax of multiple candles. More and more the room began to distort until lines became swirls, edges became curves, and shapes became obsolete. It was then that Shadow knew. He was caught in one of her paintings.

Chapter 7 by Lord Yorxid



Shadow screamed in rage. Escaping a single painting had taken extraordinary effort, just to end up in another painting.

The Midnight Painter truly was genius. Not just artistically, which she was as well, but strategically.

And now she'd sell *this* painting, probably for thousands of dollars. She'd make up some bullshit story of how "it represents my inner despair" or something like that. It'd happened before.

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time it let him move from a painting, it took a bit of his soul, whittling slowly away until there was nothing left. That's why he is a shadow.

But he'd do it again and again if it meant getting back at the Midnight Painter for what she'd done to him.

Chapter 8 by Tayler Melvin



The painting rocked back and forth, dislodging itself from its easel. A black liquid gathered on the floor, slithering as if it were a snake. The black liquid began forming, taking upon the shape of a human. The liquid spread out, forming arms and fingers. Slithering across the wall towards the doorway where it dropped back into a liquid and poured under the door. He was free again. He knew his way around the gallery just as one knows every inch of their lover. Gracefully sliding under doorways and across walls, seeking out the one who had caused him an eternity of pain.

There, light under the door. He had found her.

the end

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